



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT REPORT

HEARING DATE: November 15, 2001

TO: Orange County Zoning Administrator

FROM: Current Planning Services Division

SUBJECT: Public Hearing on Planning Application PA 01-0067 for a Site Development Permit

PROPOSAL: Construction of 154 senior housing dwelling units with an off-street parking modification to reduce the required amount of parking spaces from 233 to 202 spaces.

LOCATION: The site is located in the Ladera Planned Community at 27114 Antonio Parkway within the Fifth Supervisorial District.

APPLICANT: Jay Bullock, Planning Solutions (Agent)

STAFF CONTACT: James Thue, Project Manager
Phone: (714) 834-2179 FAX: (714) 834-4652

SYNOPSIS: Current Planning Services Division recommends Zoning Administrator approval of PA 01-0067 subject to findings and conditions.

BACKGROUND:

The project site is located in Planning Area 1 of the Ladera Planned Community, which includes the area between Crown Valley Parkway and the PC boundary. Planning Area 1 includes the development of single-family dwelling units, community facilities, and public and private parks. Planning Area One is broken into five sub-areas. The subject site is located in Planning Subarea 1-E. The subject site is vacant and rough graded. The Urban Activity Center area is located south of the project. The Chiquita Ridge Open Space Area and the Las Flores Open Space Area are located north and east of the site.

The applicant requests the approval of a Site Development Permit for a modification to parking standards together with a 154-unit senior apartment complex. Within the Ladera P.C. the Zoning Administrator may permit alternative provisions to the off-street parking regulations subject to the approval of a Site Development Permit. Concurrent with this project is a request for a lot line adjustment and private drive re-alignment between the proposed site and recorded tract 15619.

SURROUNDING LAND USE:

Direction	Land Use/Orange County General Plan Designation	Zoning
Project Site	P.A. 1 – Senior Housing (1B)	PC “Planned Community”
North	P.A. 1 – Fire Station (1B)	PC “Planned Community”
South	P.A. 6 – Urban Activity Center (6)	PC “Planned Community”
East	Rancho Mission Viejo Land Holdings (OS)	A1 “General Agricultural”
West	P.A. 1 – Residential (1B)	PC “Planned Community”

REFERRAL FOR COMMENT AND PUBLIC NOTICE:

A Notice of Hearing was mailed to all owners of record within 300 feet of the subject site. Additionally, a notice was posted at the site, at the 300 N. Flower Building, and at the Hall of Administration, as required by established public hearing posting procedures. The proposal was distributed to several County divisions for review and comment.

As of the writing of this staff report, comments raising issues with the project have been received from County divisions by staff. Traffic Section reviewed the plans and made comments regarding maneuvering areas, road fee programs, and requirements for adequate sight distance at all intersections and driveways in the complex. The applicant has revised plans in order to facilitate better maneuvering areas. Harbors Beaches and Parks reviewed the plans and requested revision to the scenic easement that was previously recorded. All comments have been addressed through plan revision or by the recommended conditions of approval that are included within Appendix B.

CEQA COMPLIANCE:

The proposed project is covered by Final EIR 555, previously certified on 10/17/95. Prior to project approval, the decision-maker must assert that this EIR is adequate to satisfy the requirements of CEQA for the proposed project.

DISCUSSION/ANALYSIS:

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The site is situated on 5.19 acres of land in the Ladera Planned Community on the corner of Crown Valley Parkway and Antonio Parkway. The project consists of two three-story apartment buildings and a single story recreation building. Dwelling units will vary in size from 663 to 1,150 square feet. Building One will consist of 72 units and will be served by two sets of stairs and two elevators located at either end of the building. Building Two will consist of 82 units and will be served by two sets of stairs and two elevators as well. The recreation building will include a multi-purpose room, café, and game room. A pool and spa will

be included as part of the recreation facilities. Parking for occupants will be provided with covered and open uncovered spaces on the project site.

The project will house older adults aged 55 years and older. Generally food will not be provided, however a-la-carte food services will be provided for those who need more assistance. A-la-carte services are provided on an optional basis and not automatically charged as part of the monthly rent, as would be typical in a congregate living or assisted living project. Services provided at the site will include housekeeping, local transportation, health and wellness care, dry cleaning, and organized trips and activities.

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

The two main buildings will have a height of 35 feet, the maximum height in accordance with the Site Development Standards. These two residential buildings will contain architectural features, which are not habitable structures, that are proposed to extend above the 35' height limit. The features are composed of architectural towers to balance the design of the buildings. The buildings include large rotundas, balconies, and railing features with tile roofs. The rotundas are the primary architectural features that extend above the 35' height limit. Architectural features proposed for Building One are 43' in height; and the features for Building Two are 37'6" in height. These architectural features are allowed to exceed the height limit by no more than 10 feet. Additionally, site development standards prohibit architectural features from exceeding 10% of the roof area. The architectural features comprise 9.25% of the roof area for Building One and 9% of the roof area for Building Two. The recreation building will have a maximum height of 32 feet. All buildings satisfy the setback requirements.

Development standards require that all trash and storage areas be shielded from view. The applicant is proposing garbage chutes to be located within the two buildings. The garbage will be stored inside the building with access doors located near a collection area where the garbage bins can be rolled out when trash collection takes place. Therefore, there are not any exterior trash enclosures on the project site.

Development standards require a minimum of 10% of the building site be preserved as open space. The project plans on utilizing 29% of the site as open space. Open space is intended for common use by all occupants of the project and excludes areas where a slope in excess of twenty percent exists. Open space will include grass areas around the buildings, a recreation area including a pool, and the pedestrian walkway-entrance area.

The maximum building site coverage for this site according to the Ladera Planned Community development standards is 60 percent. The Ladera Planned Community Program Text defines building site coverage as:

The area of land within the perimeter of all structures located on the building site (not including the area under unenclosed eaves and unenclosed post-supported overhangs, patios, courtyards, arcades, swimming pools) and including covered and uncovered off-street parking facilities, divided by the building site area.

The applicant proposes to use 2.28 acres or 41% of the property for the building site. The calculated area includes the building footprint and parking areas, both covered and uncovered.

SCREENING/LANDSCAPING

Several of the carport structures (on the east and south portions of the property) abut the property line and will be screened from neighboring properties by the use of landscaping. Land surrounding the perimeter of the property is owned and maintained by DMB Ladera (Rancho Mission Viejo Company). Ladera will provide trees, shrubs, and other vegetation as a tool for screening for the project from the surrounding areas.

PARKING AND CIRCULATION

Crown Valley Parkway and Antonio Parkway will provide ingress and egress to the site. Crown Valley Parkway will be the main entrance into the complex, while Siren Drive will provide access from Antonio Parkway. The Siren Drive entrance will allow a left turn at the signalized intersection at Antonio Parkway and will provide access to the senior complex as well as provide access for the Orange County Fire Authority's proposed fire station, which will be located directly north of the senior complex. The Crown Valley Parkway entrance will have a 15' ingress and a 15' egress with a median in the middle. Drive isle widths will be a minimum of 26' wide. Three areas are included in the site plan design and are made visible by inter-colored concrete banding that is laid out in a circular format to provide for vehicle maneuvering and on-site circulation. A drop-off/pick-up area is located in front of both apartment buildings. Any deliveries that take place will also be located in front of the buildings.

In accordance with Section 7-9-145, off-street parking regulations should not always be used as a fixed standard. Parking standards are evaluated on the basis of needs and according to the use and design of the project. Parking requirements as stipulated in the Zoning Code Section 7-9-145 are based on bedroom counts and/or based on square footage of the units. The bedroom count method would require 266 parking spaces and the square footage method would require 233 parking spaces. However, the applicant requests a modification to parking standards. The applicant proposes 202 parking spaces, consisting of 154 covered spaces (one space for each unit), 42 uncovered spaces, and 6 handicap parking spaces. The proposal will be a total of 29 parking spaces short under the square footage method for off-street parking regulations and a total of 64 spaces short under the bedroom count method. However, the applicant contends that a senior apartment project demand for parking is less than the standard parking requirements.

The applicant has submitted a parking study prepared by Linscott Law & Greenspan Engineers and concluded that sufficient parking will be provided on the site. The study included parking surveys and observations at other senior apartments within south Orange County. Observations made during the surveys found no parking deficiencies. The study concluded that a minimum-parking ratio of 0.95 spaces per unit or 146 parking spaces would be sufficient for this site. Subdivision and Grading Services reviewed the plan and found the study to be acceptable. The applicant is proposing a parking ratio of 1.3 spaces per unit. A copy of the parking study is included as Exhibit 3. The 202 parking spaces proposed meets the intent of the off-street parking requirements, and Current Planning Services Division recommends that the Zoning Administrator approve the requested parking modification.

PLANNING AREA ONE ANALYSIS

The applicant desires a "clean up" amendment to the Area Plan Statistical Summary to reflect the proposed 154-unit senior apartment complex. This senior housing project proposes an additional 26 units in Planning Sub-area 1-E, where only 128 dwelling units are permitted under Area Plan PA97-0174. However, the total units in Sub-areas 1-A, 1-B, and 1-C, including this project's 154 units in Sub-area 1-E

equals 1,287 units, which does not exceed the February 28, 2001 Planning Commission approved cap of 1,300 dwelling units within Planning Area 1.

According to Section XI of the Ladera Ranch Comprehensive Entitlement Summary, no Area Plan Amendment shall be required when units are reallocated between planning subareas contained in the same Area Plan as long as the total number of units in the planning area does not change. Appendix A contains a finding for Planning Sub-area 1-E dwelling unit allocation.

SCENIC EASEMENT LOT LINE ADJUSTMENT

A scenic preservation easement has been previously dedicated to the County of Orange on the westerly slopes of Chiquita Ridge. Approximately 0.112 acres of this scenic easement has been graded and is planned to become part of the senior housing project. A Lot Line Adjustment (LLA) has been submitted to PDSB in regard to the senior housing development. The LLA will result in a small amount of Scenic Easement land to be lost. However, it should be noted that this area was previously graded during the construction of Antonio Parkway and does not contain any vegetation. Included in the Conditions of Approvals for this project, Harbors Beaches and Parks has required the applicant to balance any scenic easement property lost through this development in other areas within Ladera.

CONCLUSION OR SUMMARY:

The proposed 154 unit senior housing apartments meet the zoning regulations for the Planned Community District. The proposed project will meet the development standards for the Ladera PC Program Text.

Parking studies provided by the applicant demonstrate how similar parking modifications to Senior Projects meet parking demands. Many of the elderly couples have no need for more than one car and therefore the same parking demands as a “normal” apartment complex will not be necessary. Staff concludes that the project will meet the intent of off-street parking requirements, based on specific use and expected demand of the development and recommends approval of the off-street parking modification.

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

Current Planning Services Division recommends the Zoning Administrator:

- a. Receive staff presentation and public testimony as appropriate; and,
- b. Approve Planning Application PA 01-0067 for a Site Development Permit relating to off-street parking modification request, subject to the attached Findings and Conditions of Approval.

Respectfully submitted

Chad G. Brown, Section Chief
Site Planning & Consistency Section

ATTACHMENTS:

- Appendix A. Recommended Findings
- Appendix B. Recommended Conditions of Approval

EXHIBITS:

1. Applicant's Letter of Explanation
2. Environmental Documentation
3. Linscott Law & Greenspan Parking Study
4. Aerial Photo of Site
5. Project Plans

APPEAL PROCEDURE:

Any interested person may appeal the decision of the Zoning Administrator on this permit to the Orange County Planning Commission within 15 calendar days of the decision upon submittal of required documents and a filing fee of \$760.00 filed at the Development Processing Center, 300 N. Flower St., Santa Ana.